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EDUCATION WEEK

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Kozol Book Puts Human Face on Fiscal Inequities

Property-Tax System Is Culprit, Author Says

By Lynn Olson

"We have a school in East St. Louis named for Dr. King," the author Jonathan Kozol quotes a 14-year-old girl saying toward the beginning of his new book, *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools.* "The school is full of sewer water and the doors are locked with chains. Every student in that school is black. It's like a terrible joke on history."

Such humor is bitter indeed, according to Mr. Kozol. He places most of the blame for such conditions on the "arcane machinery," based heavily on local property taxes, that is used to finance public education.

Drawing on visits to inner-city and suburban classrooms in some 30 neighborhoods around the country, the prominent social activist and former teacher concludes that American schools are more racially and economically segregated today they were at the height of the civil-rights era.

This "dual society seems in general to be unquestioned," he writes in the book, set for release Oct. 15 by Crown Publishers. "The nation, for all practice and intent, has turned its back upon the moral implications, if not yet the legal ramifications, of the *Brown* [v. *Board of Education*] decision."

Mr. Kozol established his reputation as an impassioned commentator on inequities in education with his first book, *Death at an Early Age*, published in 1967. That book was a first-person account of his experience as a 4th-grade teacher in inner-city Boston. Since then, he has written about school desegregation, illiterate Americans, and,

Continued on Page 11

Reality Tempers 'New Futures' Leaders' Optimism

By Deborah L. Cohen

Three years after the Annie E. Casey Foundation committed $50 million to an ambitious five-year effort to raise student achievement and stem dropout rates, teenage pregnancy, and youth unemployment in five cities, project participants' initial enthusiasm and optimism has been tempered by a healthy dose of reality.

"This was the first time we had a five-year commitment and a sense of quite a bit of money to work with" to address youth issues comprehensively, recalled James Van Vleck, a retired Mead Corporation senior vice president and the chairman of the interagency collaborative overseeing the grant in Dayton, Ohio.

"It made us think it was going to be a piece of cake," he said.

But Casey Foundation executives and project leaders now admit that the "piece of cake" was much bigger and more difficult to digest than they had first imagined.

They recount story after story about how complicated it has been to coordinate the efforts of a wide range of youth-serving institutions, including schools and human-service agencies.

Continued on Page 12

Michael Williams

Mel Crafter, the principal at Roth Middle School in Dayton, Ohio, with students Chauiti Kirby, left, and Nikia Houston.

Arizona's Chief in the Eye of Storm As Lawsuits and Allegations Swirl By

By Peter West

PHOENIX—An attentive newspaper reader following the fortunes of Arizona's public schools could well come to the conclusion that the state education system is in an unusual degree of crisis.

Over the course of the past year, Arizona educators have been hit with a series of investigations, allegations, and disputes that, taken together, would seem to go well beyond those plaguing other states.

The publicized problems include:

- Controversy over the personal and professional life of the state schools chief;
- Charges of contract fraud within the state education department;
- Evidence of fraud involving a school district on an Indian reservation;
- Contentions by federal officials that the state is ineligible for impact-aid payments because of the inadequacy of its school-finance system;
- A lawsuit challenging the fairness of school funding; and
- Battles over a tight state budget that could endanger efforts to achieve a consensus on school-reform measures.

Sitting calmly at the center of this maelstrom is Superintendent of Public Instruction C. Diane Bishop, who defends her record after nearly five years in office and contends that she is taking aggressive steps to counter problems that are largely the fault of her predecessors.

In an interview in her office at the state education department here, Ms. Bishop argued that much of the unfavorable publicity that has dogged her and the department

Continued on Page 20

New Mission Sought For Diffusion Network On 10th Anniversary

By Julie A. Miller

SAN ANTONIO—When the National Dissemination Study Group gathered this month to mark the organization's 10th anniversary, the primary topic was not nostalgia but the prospect of radical change.

The association, a group of educators who are involved with the National Diffusion Network, convened here to discuss the network's successes, its frustrations, and its limitations. Above all, they came to talk about how they might change the small, $14-million-a-year federal program, which offers a catalog of exemplary methods and curricula, into a dissemination system that has a broad impact on schools.

After three days of brainstorming, a consensus emerged on several broad ideas for expanding the network's mission and improving its operation. But factions also emerged within the study group that advocated a more drastic step: abandoning the current program in favor of a new entity divorced from the U.S. Education Department.

"I don't know what's going to come of

Continued on Page 23

Pam Berry

A sign over the door of the Williams School in Chelsea, Mass., welcomes students in five languages.

Chelsea Schools Reopen Amid Uncertainty Over Near-Bankrupt City's Fiscal Health

By Ann Bradley

CHELSEA, MASS.—As children streamed back into this city's aged schools last week to begin another year of study, some were greeted by an important visitor: James F. Carlin, the state-appointed receiver who now runs this suburban Boston city.

Mr. Carlin's presence in the classrooms on the first day of school underscored once again the financial plight of the school system, which is entering its third year of management by Boston University.

As Chelsea slid into virtual bankruptcy over the spring and summer, B.U. administrators were forced to lay off nearly one-third of the city's teachers and, in the process, scrap promising new programs.

The budget crisis threatens to overshadow the gains achieved during the first two years of the partnership, in which B.U., a private university, assumed control of the public schools here in the first such arrangement in the nation.

University officials were well aware of the city's chronic budget troubles when they began studying the failing school system in 1986. But at the time, recalls Theodore Sharp, chairman of B.U.'s Chelsea management team, the state was in the midst of an economic boom.

"The project was conceived in the heady days of the Massachusetts Miracle," Mr. Sharp said, "and began in the low days of the recession."

Boston University's comprehensive plan for overhauling the city's antiquated school system called for the city to maintain its level of funding for the schools. Instead, the

Continued on Page 16

Also in the news

5 **L.A. Draw**
Employee unions and the school board reach an impasse over a budget containing the steepest school cutbacks in a decade.

21 **Young Dropouts**
A new study documents that a substantial number of students are dropping out before they enter high school.

IN SUMMARY

Falling Short
School-based management in Boston has not significantly altered instruction and has not shifted real authority to the schools, according to a report. **Page 5.**

Southern Philanthropy
Education philanthropy in the Southeastern United States lags well behind that of other parts of the country, despite the severe needs of schools in that region, a study concludes. **Page 5.**

Sound Mind, Sound Body
Kansas City, Mo., boasts the nation's first "classical Greek" magnet school—and the ancient Greeks themselves may never have had it so good. **Page 6.**

'Carmen' Hits the Screen
The Public Broadcasting Service is set to launch its first-ever daily game show—this one aimed at improving knowledge of geography among young people. **Page 8.**

Curbing Child Abuse
A federal advisory panel is proposing a national program of home visits by health workers and aides to stem the rising tide of cases of reported child abuse. **Page 8.**

Sharing the Wealth
Michigan lawmakers last week were set to pass legislation that would provide poor school districts with a share of the new tax revenues produced by economic growth in other parts of the state. **Page 18.**

Family-Leave Compromise
Three U.S. senators offered a compromise last week in an attempt to break a deadlock on a bill to grant unpaid leave to workers to care for infants or ill family members. **Page 21.**

Commentary	24 and 32
Deadlines	27
Focus On: Curriculum	6
Grants	27
Legislative Update	19
Letters	26
Marketplace	28
Publishing	24
State Journal	18

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ACROSS THE NATION

NATIONAL

Campaign To Promote Goals of United Nations Children's Summit

Nearly 600 U.S. cities and more than 45 nations plan to participate in an international campaign aimed at increasing public awareness of the goals reached at last year's first World Summit for Children.

During last September's summit, sponsored by the United Nations, President Bush and 70 other heads of state committed themselves to achieving seven basic goals by the year 2000. These include reducing infant mortality by one-third, lowering adult illiteracy rates by one-half, and providing universal access to basic education.

Organized by the planners of that summit, this year's effort, "Keeping the Promise," will mark the first anniversary of the World Summit, will attempt to educate the public about the summit's goals and those of the President's America 2000 program, and will suggest methods for ensuring the realization of those objectives.

Events, to be organized in schools and places of worship between Sept. 27 and Oct. 13, will include a School Activities Week from Sept. 29 through Oct. 4. Among the initial events will be a 250-mile "Pony Express" ride that will pick up children's letters about summit promises and deliver them to Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado. Also planned are rallies at local centers of the federal Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children in Salt Lake City, San Diego, and Tucson, Ariz. ■

STATES

Colo. Supreme Court Upholds Jail Term for Truant Students

Children who are truant from school can be sent to jail if they disobey court orders to return to class, the Colorado Supreme Court has ruled.

In doing so, the state high court overturned a state law that prohibited jailing juveniles who commit such offenses as truancy or running away from home.

The decision upholds that of Colorado Springs District Judge Richard Toth, who sentenced a youth to 20 days at a detention center for contempt of court after the youth refused to attend classes. Judge Toth held that a 1990 state law barring such an action was unconstitutional.

That law, the supreme court agreed, would "render [judges] unable to preserve the dignity of the court."

In the case, a student identified only as J.E.S. three times ignored court orders in 1989 and 1990 to return to class. The student did perform 10 hours of community service required by the judge, but ignored a court order to attend summer school.

Children in the state are required to attend school until age 15. ■

DISTRICTS

Federal Court Ends Desegregation Case Against Lubbock Schools

The Lubbock (Tex.) Independent School District, which has been under a court-ordered desegregation plan for 21 years, has won its freedom from court supervision.

U.S. District Judge Halbert O. Woodward removed the district from court supervision this month after ruling that Lubbock had complied with federal desegregation orders issued in 1970.

Termination of court supervision will save the district more than $300,000 each year. The court's decision, however, still must be approved by the U.S. Justice Department.

A district reorganization plan accepted by the court calls for minority students to be bused for one year, instead of the current two, and for the city's second-oldest high school to be transformed into a magnet junior high.

■ **At least a dozen ousted Chicago school principals have filed complaints alleging that they were not retained by local school councils because of race, age, or sex discrimination.**

Bruce Berndt, president of the Chicago Principals Association, said 23 of the 32 white principals who were not retained last spring were replaced by members of minority groups. Many have charged that they were dismissed in favor of black or Hispanic administrators who were deemed more suitable "role models."

At least half of the white principals have filed complaints with the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and are likely to file suit in federal court alleging that school councils violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Mr. Berndt said.

In 1990, about two-thirds of the rejected incumbent principals were replaced by principals of the same race as most students at their respective schools, Mr. Berndt said. This year, more than 90 percent of the local school councils that replaced principals chose successors from their schools' dominant racial groups.

■ **In what is apparently Georgia's first such criminal conviction, a retired Atlanta principal pleaded no contest this month to simple battery charges stemming from his paddling of a student.**

Alfred Scott, formerly the principal at Minnie Howell Elementary School, was fined $250 on the misdemeanor charge and was released, said Fulton County Solicitor James L. Webb.

The charge arose from a 1990 incident in which Mr. Scott was said to have struck an 11-year-old boy's bare buttocks with a table-tennis paddle. The punishment left dark bruises the size of grapefruits on both buttocks, according to law-enforcement officials.

State law in Georgia permits paddling as long as the punishment is "not excessive or unduly severe." But corporal punishment has been prohibited in Atlanta schools since 1959, according to Edward Shaw, operations administrator for the district.

Mr. Webb said the paddling rendered by Mr. Scott went "over and beyond" what was appropriate. "I would say it was very excessive," he said.

■ **Voters in Dade County, Fla., this month showed interest in changing the district's method of electing school-board members,** as 56 percent of the voters in a nonbinding ballot question said they would prefer choosing single representives from districts across the county to the present system.

School-board members who are now chosen through a countywide vote have opposed changes to the system, which proponents said would promise greater minority representation on the board. The seven-member Dade school board currently includes one black and one Hispanic member.

Under the current system, five of the board's members must reside in different voting districts. Beyond the recent straw poll, the system is currently being challenged in court by Hispanics and blacks

The 'Wonder' Is Gone

Even good ratings can't keep a student out of trouble. That's what the young actor Fred Savage (a.k.a. Kevin Arnold) and the rest of the cast and crew of the popular television series "The Wonder Years" discovered when they recently were suspended from filming at a Burbank, Calif., high school.

For the past three years, the producers of the show have used the classrooms, gymnasium, and playing fields of Burroughs High to record scenes of adolescent angst featuring Kevin and his friends. While Burroughs students may have been transfixed by the sight of film crews working during classes, teachers and parents were less enthusiastic.

So, after numerous complaints that the film crew's schedule had forced classes to be relocated and that students were sometimes less than attentive to their studies, officials of the Burbank Unified School District decided to pull the plug on unlimited filming of the show.

In so doing, the district loses a reported $10,000 a year in fees.

Richard Tighe, assistant superintendent of the school district, defends the ban on filming during classes.

"Sure, the money was nice, but we have to ensure that students don't get disrupted," he says. "If you had a choice between concentrating on calculus and watching a film shoot, what would you do?"

Capital Cities/ABC

Fred Savage, center, stars as Kevin Arnold in "The Wonder Years." Also pictured, from left to right, are Jason Hervey, Olivia d'Abo, Dan Lauria, and Alley Mills.

Faced with a permanent suspension, the show's producers decided to drop out of Burroughs altogether and begin filming at another school.

Which means the students of Burroughs, who were used as extras in many scenes shot for the series, have had their 15 minutes of fame.

But that's show business. —S.K.G.

Photos by Steve Gonzales

Steve Gonzales

At Central High School in Kansas City, Roger Finkmeier, left, a physical-development teacher, works with Quincy Williams as part of the school's "classical Greek" curriculum that stresses development of both the mind and the body. Above, Art Rainwater, the district's associate superintendent for curriculum and instruction, stands next to the school's Olympic-sized pool.

trict is also building a stadium across the street from the school, which will include four tennis courts, an outdoor track, and football, soccer, and rugby fields.

Consultants and school officials selected Central for the classical Greek magnet, in part, because it was viewed as one of the most difficult schools to desegregate. As late as 1987, every student at the school was black. Last year, a year after the computer magnet opened, the proportion of African-American students had declined only slightly, to 92 percent.

Employees at the school said white suburban residents still ask them if they "are afraid" to work at Central.

"Whether that's fact or fiction, security is perceived to be a problem in desegregating the schools," says Walter Marks, the district's new schools superintendent.

A major draw for the new program, school officials decided, would be its athletic facilities.

"There are kids in the suburbs whose parents are paying $2,000, $3,000, and $4,000 a year for them to participate in private gymnastics clubs," Mr. Rainwater says. If the schools are to desegregate, he adds, "we're going to have to have facilities at least equivalent to that."

The school district stepped up its efforts to recruit white, suburban students to Central and three other inner-city magnet programs with a targeted marketing campaign. Linda Smaagard, the district's marketing and recruitment director, says the effort included television, radio, and print advertisements, brochures, and, in Central's case, two "hard hat" tours to view the new building.

"I think Central is kind of a linchpin of whether we're successful or not at the high-school level," Mr. Marks says. "We're at a point now where, if we don't make some major improvement in test scores and desegregation levels, then we've sorely missed the mark."

Already, the classical Greek magnet program appears to be having some success, school officials say. This year, 71 percent of the 235 students entering the program are black. In contrast, 88 percent of the 800 students in the computer program are African-American.

"A lot of my friends are going to try to come here," says Derrik Rogers, a student from a mostly white section of the city whose interest in karate and weightlifting led him to Central.

"In a white shirt and blue shorts"—the school's gym uniform—"everybody's the same," he says.

The program was a draw as well for some of the teachers hired to staff it. Ed Bielek took a job as the personal-development teacher after working as a strength coach at the University of Kansas and directing a youth program at the city's Y.M.C.A.

"We've got close to an unlimited situation here to develop athletes to their fullest potential," he says. "That's very exciting, and that doesn't happen anywhere else in the country."

Pamela Peppers, a teacher in the computer program, says students at the school tell her "this is a beautiful building, and they're wanting to come to school every day."

"And these teachers seem like they've been excited from day one," she says.

'Taj Mahal'

Beyond the spanking new walls of Central, however, mention of the project still generates heated controversy. Gov. John A. Ashcroft has dubbed the building the "Taj Mahal," and senior citizens complain of having to pay higher taxes to fund it.

Michael Fields, the state's assistant attorney general, who has led the state's legal battles opposing the desegregation plan, said the school's rigorous academic program was "a sham" and labeled Central "a jock school."

"This'll be the acid test for the idea that you can attract kids with pretty buildings," he adds.

The complaints reached a peak in recent years after U.S. District Judge Russell G. Clark, who approved and oversees the desegregation plan, ordered a tax increase to pay for it. His authority to take that action was upheld last April by the U.S. Supreme Court.

The state has filed another legal action, contesting facets of the plan, before the High Court. It names Central as an example of the kind of excessive spending that can result from a desegregation plan that puts "no limits" on school officials.

Mr. Marks entered that fray seven months ago as no stranger to controversy himself. The former schools superintendent in Richmond, Calif., was criticized for spending practices earlier this year after the Richmond school district, noted for pioneering a similarly ambitious "choice" plan, filed for bankruptcy.

"I guess it would be kind of ironic," admits Mr. Marks on his selection as Kansas City schools chief.

"But if we're going to rebuild inner-city education," he adds, "we've got to build facilities that match any in the country, and urban kids deserve that." ■

Q. Studying ancient shipwrecks is exciting, but do you feel that students make the connection between your expeditions and the very hard work of day-to-day science?

A. Being scientists, we're curious about cause and effect. It's a great deal of trouble . . . it's very disruptive to our normal careers, to put this much effort into precollege education. So we don't want to do this unless it works.

So we asked Lehigh . . . to study the students to see the impact we were having, or not having. And the results were amazing.

They saw a tremendous shift in attitudes about science. When the students were preparing for the expedition, before they even heard about the Jason project, they asked them about their attitudes about science. Then, after they studied the curriculum, they asked them again. Then, after they experienced the Jason project, they asked them again.

And they saw a tremendous shift in attitude, a very positive shift. Second, they found that that impact of the project was felt equally by boys and girls.

Plus, the impact was felt greatest in grades 6 and 10, which is exactly where young people are starting to make career decisions. So it not only looks like a great deal of fun, which it is, it works.

Q. For the most part, scientists are criticized as aloof from science education. Is that your experience?

A. Scientists are used to [teaching] just a few students at one time. To have an opportunity to impact on such a large scale, I have found my scientific colleagues eager to help.

Q. How vital is the use of technology to your undertakings, and do you believe criticisms of television by educators are valid?

A. You can't have the reach, you can't bring the excitement of discovery into the classroom, in any other way.

We know that information is doubling every six years. By the time [information] gets distilled and put into a textbook, it's, to [a great] degree, ancient history.

I think [that] for a long, long time, scientists and educators cursed the television. I think now many of them are realizing how powerful it is and have made a commitment to master it. ■

DIMENSIONS

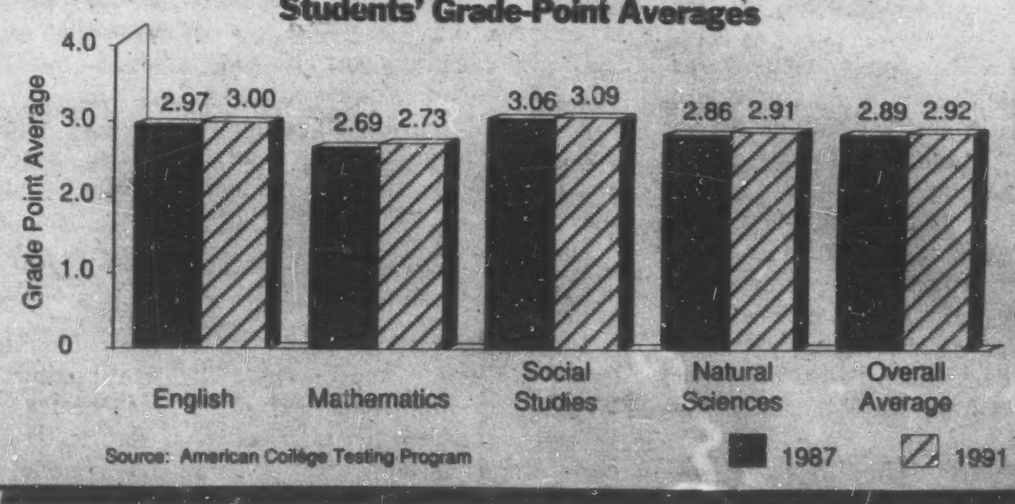
Grade Inflation

The grade-point averages of high-school seniors taking the American College Testing Program test have increased slightly over the past five years, the A.C.T. reported last week.

Grades in all subjects, and overall grade-point averages, rose by about 1 percent, to slightly less than 3.0 out of 4.0, the testing firm found.

The rise in self-reported grades accompanied a sharp increase in the number of students who reported taking a core academic curriculum. The number of seniors who said they took four years of English and three each of science, mathematics, and social studies rose from 283,557 in 1987 to 387,404, according to the testing firm.

Students' Grade-Point Averages



Source: American College Testing Program

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Special Pullout Report: 'Thinking About Thinking'

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Data, Strategy Said Missing in Report on Goals

But Educators Hail Effort as a First Step

By Lynn Olson and Robert Rothman

Educators and policymakers last week described the first national "report card" on education goals as a solid step on the road to school improvement.

But the effort to chart how the nation and the 50 states are doing on each of six national goals included some disputed data, they noted, and contained more gaps than answers.

Observers were particularly critical of a gap that the report's creators did not even try to fill: the development of a strategy for reaching the targets.

"Goals are a good thing," said Patricia Albjerg Graham, the president of the Spencer Foundation and a former dean of the Harvard University Graduate School of Education. "But the real question for the United States is how to meet the goals. And the question of how to meet them is not illustrated here."

The goals process began at the education "summit" in 1989, when President Bush and the nation's governors launched a 10-year effort to improve education. Early in 1990, they agreed on six national education goals to be met by the year 2000 and pledged to report progress

Continued on Page 17

Chris Ochsner

Pamela Tipton, a math teacher at Seaman High School outside of Topeka, Kan., where many do not put much stock in the national education goals.

In School District in the Heartland, National Reforms Escape Notice

By Jonathan Weisman

TOPEKA, KAN.—When Ellen Brentine switched on her car radio last week after a frustrating day at West Indianola Elementary School, the airwaves crackled with bad news.

U.S. Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander, she recalled, was telling the nation how poorly its schools were performing as he released the National Education Goals Panel's first report card.

Minutes later, she arrived at home to find her husband glued to the television and waving her over to hear the same discouraging news she had just turned off. She told him she had had enough.

"You know, you hear all this stuff, and sometimes you just want to tune it out," she said wearily. "It all just sounds like a broken record."

In Ms. Brentine's Seaman School District, a few miles past where the concrete of Topeka gives way to the rolling grasses of the Kansas prairie, folks do not put much stock in the national education goals or any of the other policy moves

Continued on Page 18

NCATE To Join Fla. Agencies To Review Programs

Pact May Lead to Set Of Uniform Standards

By Karen Diegmueller

Florida's education department, its state university system, and the national agency that accredits teacher-preparation programs have signed an unprecedented agreement to conduct joint reviews of teachers' colleges, using a similar set of standards.

Besides enhancing teacher-education programs in Florida, officials involved in the agreement say, the pact could help bring the country closer to a single set of rigorous standards for training teachers.

Announced last week at an executive-board meeting of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, the agreement calls for the coordination of standards by NCATE and the two state agencies.

Until now, state institutions seeking approval from the Florida education department and the state board of regents as well as accreditation by NCATE have been faced with meeting varying standards from the three agencies.

Under the new compact, all three will send examiners onto campuses simultaneously. The education schools seeking approval will prepare self-studies in the NCATE format. Out of that body of data, the education department and the board of re-

Continued on Page 21

Report Questioning 'Crisis' in Education Triggers an Uproar

By Julie A. Miller

WASHINGTON—Three researchers at a federally funded research center in New Mexico have sparked an uproar with a study of American education that concludes that policymakers and pundits who bemoan a systemwide crisis are both overstating and misstating the problem.

"Unfortunately, much of the current reform agenda, though well intentioned, is misguided," one version of the report states. "Based on a 'crisis' mentality, many proposed reforms do not properly focus on actual problems."

Some members of the research community charge that the Bush Administration is suppressing the report—which was prepared as part of an Energy Department education initiative—because it conflicts with its own rhetoric.

The researchers who prepared the report could not be reached for comment, and some sources said the researchers had told them that they feared losing their federal funding

Continued on Page 32

Schools Grapple With Columbus's Legacy: Intrepid Explorer or Ruthless Conqueror?

By Debra Viadero

Every year, Michael Connolly begins teaching his high-school students about Christopher Columbus's arrival in the Americas by asking them what they know about the famous explorer.

"Columbus sailed the ocean blue in 1492," someone usually volunteers. Another student offers the names of Columbus's three ships—the Nina, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria. Someone else points out that Columbus misnamed the Indians he encountered because he thought he had reached the Indies.

That, says the Norfolk, Va., social-studies teacher, is "just about all they know."

This year, however, as the 500th anniversary of Columbus's landing approaches, students in classes such as Mr. Connolly's will have an opportunity to learn much more. And, according to historians and educators nationwide, the story they hear this time around could be broader, more complex—and far more controversial—than anything they have heard before about the famous explorer.

The coming quincentenary of Columbus's landing has spawned a barrage of educational efforts and a passionate debate over how best to teach about the historical event and its consequences. In a new era of concern over the "multicultural" content of

Continued on Page 14

The Granger Collection

The 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus's landfall in the Americas has engendered a widespread debate about his contributions to history.

Also in the news

8 **Desegregating DeKalb**
With the U.S. Supreme Court ready to hear arguments, folks back home in Georgia continue their own debates.

9 **Meet You at the Mall**
Educators in Minnesota are hoping to place a wide-ranging public-education facility in a mammoth new mall.

22 **Sooner Showdown**
Oklahoma voters are set to decide the fate of a fiercely debated $2-billion school-reform and tax bill.